

SYDNEY TRAUMA AWARENESS TOPIC ADVANCED WORKSHOP REPORT

Date(s): Fri 30 March - Sun 1 April
Venue: Harry Jensen Centre, The Rocks, Sydney
Times: Fri 6-9, Sat 1-6, Sun 8:30-6 [4pm]
Facilitators: Anthea, Jerusha, Julei, Laurie
Support Person: Malcolm & Katherine
Report by: Katherine & Julei

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY TEAM

Workshop Summary

This was the first AVP Sydney Trauma Awareness Topic Advanced workshop and was assessed successful by both the participants and the facilitators and provided powerful and gentle learning. It was a medium sized two day workshop with nine participants and four facilitators. One participant left after Let's Choose because her level of English was not high enough to fully participate in this topic workshop.

The workshop was spread over three days, with one Friday night session, two Saturday afternoon sessions and three sessions on Sunday. The workshop drew from the range of AVP Trauma workshops including the AVP/HIP Rainbow Circles. The provisional agenda was developed by a cross-Australia planning group that met weekly on skype for six weeks.

Recommendations for AVP(NSW)

- Should we continue with Topic Advanced Trauma Awareness workshops in the future?

Recommendations for Workshop Learning

- The activities that were reported as most impactful were – The Past, Present and Future Part 2 of the River of Life and the SUDS scale of trauma or stress. The River of Life drawing, Pendulum (Pendulating), Trauma Circle and Secondary Trauma activities were also mentioned.

Facilitation Ideas

Trauma Awareness Workshop explores our recognition and understanding of the impact of trauma and loss in our lives.

One of our consistent reactions to trauma, is the belief that the world is no longer safe. Our typical responses to this belief can vary from withdrawing and isolating or to living a driven life. We often live our lives out of anger and mistrust. All of this overrides our emotions which can become like a pressure cooker inside us.

The impact of childhood trauma is huge; it effects our mental and physical health. Trauma can become a serious impediment to socialization, developing relationships and functioning in general.

It is when we become aware of trauma and loss and its impacts that we become open to all that is possible in our lives.

DAY ONE		
Session 1 Friday 6-9pm		
1	J	Welcome & Introduction to Facilitators
2	R	Connection: My name, one thing in my life that added to my resilience/resilient spirit
3	R	Agenda
4	L	Special Name Game <i>Affirmation Names</i>
5	A	What is the Topic Advanced workshop?
6	J&R	The Storm <i>A group painting</i>
7	A	R U Listening
8	A&J	The Ears <i>Two brainstorm, the bad listening ear and the good listening ear</i>
9	R	Lift: Here I Sit
10	R&J	Let's Get Physical <i>Linking levels of emotion and your physical responses</i>
11	R&A	Reflection
12		U Choose <i>Do you choose to stay in this workshop?</i>
13		Closing: Version of Rainstorm

DAY TWO		
Session 2 Saturday 1-3pm		
1	L	Welcome 2 Day 2
2	R	Connection: MSNI one word that describes trauma to me
3	u	Agenda
4	L	Circle Game <i>Stand Up or Step into the Circle</i>
5	A	Lift – Elephant, Palm Trees & Helicopters
6	JARL	SUDS <i>Watched Jaws movie trailer, looked at the SUDS Trauma/stress level scale and rated levels of stress</i>
7	L&A	Transforming Power & Keys <i>Did collage, painting, drawing or journaling about how Transforming Power relates to how you respond to trauma</i>
8	R	Reflection: one thing that stood out for me in this section

9		Close: The Storm <i>Seated around the circle, the storm is created by hands slapping the knees in increasing volume, led and modeled by the facilitator</i>
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DAY 2 Session 3 Saturday 3:30-6		
1	A	Welcome Back
2	L	Connection: My name & something I have learnt about myself
3	u	Agenda
4	L	Safe Place <i>Guided meditation and drew a picture of your safe place</i>
5	AR	Stand on the Line <i>Standing in a line on one side of the room each person, in turn, selected a way they deal with stress that rated 10 out of 10. Everyone else then rated themselves out of 10 how much they used the selected stress reduction technique</i>
6	JJ	Dial Back <i>Everyone practiced pendulum (pendulating) technique to cope with trauma. Discussed new research about trauma being stored in long term memory, being recalled or dialed back and the person being able to lay back the altered memory within between 10 minutes and 4 hours)</i>
7	R	Sculpture
8		Reflection & Closing

DAY THREE Session 4 Sunday 8:30-10:30		
1	R	Welcome 2 Day 3
2	R	Morning Stretch
3	A	Connection: A strength I have gained from trauma
4	u	Agenda
5	L	River of Life Drawing
6	J	Reflection & Close

DAY 3 Session 5 Sunday 11-1		
1	A	Welcome Back

2	A	Connection: My name & why trust is important to me
3	u	Agenda
4	RL	Past Present Future – River of Life
5	L	Reflection & Closing – River of Life song

DAY 3		
Session 6 Sunday 2-4		
1	L	Welcome to our last session
2	R	Connection: My name & a time someone else's trauma impacted me
3	u	Agenda
4	J	Speak Out!!! You can shout <i>Each person thinks of a time they experienced secondary trauma and what they would have liked to have said about it. Each person says this simultaneously four times to their out stretched hand as they walk into the circle</i>
5	L	Tree of Trust : How can I contribute to my community's level of trust <i>Each person wrote on one leaf and put it onto the poster lying in the centre of the circle</i>
6	A	Three Wishes <i>I wish for you</i>
7	J	Ungathering: My name & something I have learnt from this workshop, how I am going to contribute to my community & how I am going to look after my learning
8	MK	Where to from Here
9	u	Graduation
10	J	Closing web : something I have appreciated
11	J	Closing : Snail
12		Evaluation forms : Photos
13		COMMUNITY CLEAN UP

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Overall 1-x6, 2-x1

Content 1-x4, 2-x3, included – 'fantastic'

Process 1-x4, 2-x3, included – one set of extra smileys

Facilitation 1-x4, 2-x3, included – one set of extra smileys

(Ranking 1=excellent, 2=good, 3=OK, 4=unsatisfactory, 5=poor)

SUGGESTIONS

- More light & livelies
- Be aware of local events (Rotary fundraiser fair) and discuss the need to manage our time spent distracted
- A little more outside in natural surroundings. The number for the workshop was perfect. I would feel over ten participants less safe
- I would wish for : a leaflet with the session agendas for me at the end of the workshop
- A handout of summary to take home (to remember the skills)
- For future workshops - Do it like this one but each dynamic works with what happens then the facilitators and how it unfolds with participants
- Have a conversation at the beginning about punctuality
- Friday night start was good idea – needed the break
- Sufficient break time
- Have the video larger and clearer
- Stick to 2 full days workshops (easier to remember).

HIGHLIGHT

- Past, Present, Future
- Having Saturday morning free. Having a Friday night followed by a break and restart on Saturday afternoon. Gave me a lower intensity, less overwhelming and better able to be present and enjoy the weekend
- Secondary Trauma part
- Past – Present – Future exercise; SUDs; light & livelies
- Looking at my past, present future. SUDs scale>useful
- Circle (trauma) and Past & Present & Future.

WHAT CHANGED YOU INSIDE

- I feel softer inside, more comfortable in myself and with others; being truly heard when I shared my 'River' and shared my strength and resources of my journey – from the present to the past and from the future
- A new perspective on trauma
- My traumas once hidden are out of the wardrobe and I know what they are
- Suds > self-awareness, means I feel more confident to know when I need to to relax ; Past, Present, Future > I have more peace of mind. I got a new perspective on my life. I found it healing
- I will be aware when I am affected by trauma and when others are affected by trauma and awareness is the first step in doing something about it
- More objective able to let go
- Past & Present & Future (role plays). Seeing myself through another person gave me a different perspective.

WHAT CHANGED HOW YOU DEAL WITH VIOLENCE

- My trauma and it's agenda will/has more awareness and integration and so I have less of my own unconscious agenda activated or unaware in conflict
- Pendulating my tool are 1) Trauma (think of it/them), 2) Get my bird, 3) Get my big, big boing bell, 4) Bird flies to bell, to bell to trauma
- Stop think respond before reacting

- I just couldn't get into the river exercise. I was still totally accepted in the group
- I always think about the impacts on myself / others just before reacting.

LEAST HELPFUL

- Leaf drawing (community & trust).
- Bus noises x2
- Late starts to sessions

FACILITATION

- The explanations and information or description of recent research related to the 4 hour window and re-laying emerged trauma memory in the 4-6 SUDS range, very, very useful
- It was good the way we did, a lot of drawing and colouring as a vehicle. It took a lot of the tension out of what we were doing regarding trauma
- I learnt more about how to facilitate like hold the space and what activities flow with what topic
- Really compassionate – thank you!
- Good flow
- I would like the facilitators to work out the directions of all the activities beforehand prior to entering into the group. At times it did seem a little disorganized.

COMMENTS

- Not too much (just) not too less, light enough and just right intensity. Sequence of processes was excellent – Trauma River being followed by 'Past present and future' process
- I really appreciate all the many hours of work and effort that goes into the facilitation. Thank you
- This workshop was so different it's difficult to evaluate in the usual way. I am blown away by what we have been through and how it was less painful than I thought it would be. Proud to be part of the first Trauma Workshop in Oz
- It was very, very helpful
- I like seeing Julei refer to some booklet but questions were same in a way as what happened, what was hard and what would you do differently
- Really interesting.